

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 06 February 2005

You are listening to Amateur Radio Station ZS6SRL of the South African Radio League, the National society for Amateur Radio in South Africa, with a news bulletin that is broadcast every Sunday at 08:15 Central Africa Time (CAT) in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English.

This bulletin is also available on the website of the SARL at www.sarl.org.za, on packet bulletin boards and on Echolink from Chris, ZS6FCS.

SILENT KEYS

Wolkberg Amateur Radio Club informed us that Graham Dearman, ZR6GAD, who was licenced only about a year ago, passed away on the 31st January. He was originally from England, worked for many years at Kariba power station and thereafter 17 years at the Phalaborwa copper mine. He retired 2 years ago and was almost ready to tackle the 12 wpm morse test for a ZS licence. Condolences to his wife Dianne and son, other relatives and friends.

It is with sadness that the Highway Amateur Radio Club announces that Harold Sink, ZS5KA, at the age of 93 years became a silent key on Wednesday 26th January 2005. Harold was licenced for more than 70 years, a member of the SARL and the Highway branch and club. He was very active on HF and made lasting friends in Japan and Australia and had the privilege of eyeballing many of them. When he had to relinquish the use of his 6 element beam on top of the highest windmill tower in the CBD, he made other innovative plans to remain active on HF but then the Highway club's repeaters and the IRLP node provided by Brad Phillips, ZS5BP, Harold was able to maintain his skeds with Aussieland. He also became active with computers at 86 and with it participated in the East Coast Virtual Airways flight simulator club activities. Condolences to his spouse Bea, his daughter Jenny, sons Ken and Howard, Grand children Sheldon, Kerry and Catriona, other relatives and friends.

(PAUSE)

In the news today:

ZR'S GET HF PRIVILEGES AS THE FACE OF AMATEUR RADIO CHANGES

PRESS RELEASE BY CITY POWER CAUSE PLC HYPE

BOOK NOW FOR THE SKA LECTURE

SARL HF FIELD DAY

LOCAL DXCC LISTING

Stay tuned for more detail on these and other news items.

Visit the SARL Web site or call the SARL office which is open on weekdays from 09:00 to 13:00 at 011 675 2393 for details on how to join, book sales and all related amateur radio activities.

SARL NEWS depends on clubs and individuals for news of interest to radio amateurs. Please place your news items on the web site of the SARL, which is www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date. It would be appreciated if you could do it in both Afrikaans and English.

ZR'S GET HF PRIVILEGES AS THE FACE OF AMATEUR RADIO CHANGES

ZR's get new privileges as the face of Amateur Radio Changes in South Africa with the publication of amendments to the Radio regulations on Friday afternoon in Government Gazette number 27 258 and are now available in PDF format on the SARL web, www.sarl.org.za.

"The publication of the amendments to the radio regulation is the culmination of many years of hard work and dedication by the council of the SARL" Graham Harlett, President of the SARL said. Speaking from his hospital bed he said that it heralds in a new era for amateur radio making it more accessible to the younger generation yet maintaining the standard for which the service is known.

From Friday ZR's have been given access to the HF band at a power level of 20 dBW, which translates to 100 watts input. ZR's now have access to the following HF bands: 160, 80, 40, as well as the following frequencies ranges: on 20 metres 14 070 - 14 099 kHz, 14 225 - 14 250 kHz, on 15 metres 21 070 - 21 120 and 21 300 - 21 450 kHz, on 10 metres 28 050 - 28 150 and 28 300 - 28 500 kHz.

ZR's can upgrade to a full ZS licence with all privileges by meeting one of the following criteria:

Operating Achievement: Confirmed contacts with 100 separate stations on any combination of bands or modes. Note that the requirement of 100 separate stations means that each station can only be counted once, even if it is contacted on many bands or modes.

Electronics Construction: The candidate must construct and demonstrate one of the following: A working direct conversion or superheterodyne radio receiver that can receive and demodulate transmissions on any frequency allocated to the amateur service in any mode used by the amateur service; A working crystal-controlled transmitter that can transmit modulated signals with a power of at least 1 watt on a frequency allocated to the amateur service using any modulation method used by the amateur service.

Public Service and Emergency Communications: The candidate must provide proof that he or she has spent at least 50 hours providing communications services for one or more public service events.

Recognition of professional qualifications: The candidate must provide proof that he or she has been awarded any of the following qualifications: A nationally recognized tertiary degree, diploma or trade certificate in electronics or radio that would ordinarily require at least two years of study to complete; or a PMG1 or equivalent certificate qualifying the candidate as a marine radio officer.

Morse Code Proficiency: The candidate must demonstrate the ability to send by hand and receive by ear Morse code at a speed of not less than 5 words per minute. Full details can be found on www.sarl.org or from your local radio club.

PRESS RELEASE BY CITY POWER CAUSE PLC HYPE

Last week a presentation made by Teddy Naidoo at the African Telecommunication Summit stating that Johannesburg and Pretoria could have cheap voice and data by the middle of this year was responsible for a new PLC Hype. Currently everyone is riding high on the Minister's announcement made in September last year that telecommunications would be deregulated. A further announcement is expected on 1 February so currently many opportunists are trying to pre-empt what the Minister will announce next week. The importance of the African Telecommunications Summit should also be taken into account. Of the 90 seats only half were filled on the opening day and by the second afternoon only 20 delegates were attending. In addition many speakers had withdrawn and the organisers had to rearrange the programme.

Currently Power Line Communication has not been regulated and its is doubtful that there will be a gap that will allow PLC to slip through the regulators net, even with the deregulation of Voice over the Internet Protocol. There are still interference regulations to contend with. Systems being tested in South Africa miss the emission standards by 30 dB.

In his statement, as quoted by Reuters, Naidoo said that Electricity firms in Johannesburg and Pretoria are launching the service but other regions would quickly follow, meaning that they would eventually offer a national network. Meanwhile the electricity line network would rely on Telkom for long distance calls.

One wonders on which planet Teddy Naidoo lives. In the US, where some licensing is in place, there has been no permanent successful installation to date while many trials are being abandoned due to interference problems. The Telecommunications Standards Authority, ETSI, has not been able to agree on a universal emission standard. Many would-be PLC equipment manufacturers are pressing for lower limits for PLC while European Governments, many being lobbied by the IARU, are holding back.

The SARL is watching developments closely and has prepared a position paper for discussion with ICASA and ultimate publication. Once the Minister makes her announcement on Tuesday, SARL will evaluate its position and make changes as required. After that President Graham Hartlett will meet with ICASA to put the SARL's position to the regulator.

BOOK NOW FOR THE SKA LECTURE

The South African Radio League is holding a lecture on the SKA project with Prof Justin Jonas as guest speaker. The lecture is part of the SARL's Radio Technology in Action Programme which focuses on new and emerging communication and electronic technologies.

The lecture will be held at the SARL National Amateur Radio Centre at Sender Technology Park in Roodepoort 12 February starting at 10:00. Bookings are essential to assist with arrangement. An entrance fee of R20 is payable at the door. The entrance fee covers refreshments and entry into a lucky attendance prize draw. To book call the SARL on 011 675 2393 or email admin@sarl.org.za.

The Square Kilometre Array (SKA), is currently being designed and may be located in South Africa. The lecture describes the scientific opportunities and technical challenges that characterize the SKA project, with a particular emphasis on the South African perspective. Prof Justin Jonas is Professor of Physics & Electronics, Rhodes University and Managing Director, Hartebeesthoek Radio Astronomy Observatory.

SARL HF FIELD DAY

The first leg of the SARL HF Field Day will be on the air from 10:00 UTC on Saturday 12 February until 10:00 UTC on Sunday 13 February. It is a CW and phone contest with activity on 160, 80, 40 and 20 metres. Each Phone and CW segment is considered a separate band and a station may only be worked once per band.

The rules of this contest are available on the SARL website www.sarl.org.za and have also been sent out with HF Happenings 132.

LOCAL DXCC LISTING

Chris Burger, ZS6EZ, has just updated his Band and Country Listing and is asking everyone with high scores on any of the HF bands and who would like to be listed, to contact him. You can look at the listing at <http://zs6ez.za.org/lists/bands/latest.htm>. The listing shows the top six on each band and is updated at the end of each month. Chris also has a listing updated at the end of each year showing the top ten. It has not been updated recently because he has not received any scores until a couple of weeks ago.

PROPAGATION CONDITIONS

Kobus, ZS6KOB, was away for more than a week and in a telephone conversation with him yesterday he confirmed that sunspot activity is down and that he cannot forecast improved conditions within the foreseeable future. This is unfortunate, especially for the ZR's who had been looking forward for many DX contacts. However, do not despair, one never knows when an unexpected opening may occur. Start late afternoon and if you look eastwards, you may well stand a good chance to make a contact or two.

DIARY OF EVENTS

10 February Submit synopsis of proposed papers for AMSATCON2005; 12 February - RTA lecture at the NARC at 10:00; 12 and 13 February SARL HF Field Day; 31 March - Submit final papers for AMSATCON2005; closing date for part 1 of the 2005 Construction Competition; 08 April - SARL Awards Dinner; 09 April - SARL AGM; 14 May - AMSATCON2005.

The SARL invites you to listen on Sundays at 10:00 to Amateur Radio Mirror International on 17 700, 9 750, and 7 082 kHz and many 2 m repeaters in different areas. A repeat broadcast can be heard on Mondays at 21:00 CAT on 3 215 kHz.

Telkom and Sentech sponsor ARMI.

This then brings us to the end of today's bulletin, which was compiled by Dennis, ZS4BS, and read byfrom..... as a service to radio amateurs, short wave listeners and electronic enthusiasts.

You have been listening to ZS6SRL and thank you for having joined us. Also many thanks to those persons who supply news for our bulletins and the amateurs who relay the bulletins so regularly.

Goodbye everyone.

/EX